Numb. 239

The TATLER.

By *Iſaac Bickerſtaff* Eſq;

—— *Mecum certaſſe feretur.* Ovid.

From *Tueſday October* 17. to *Thurſday October* 19. 1710.

From my own Apartment, October 18.

IT is ridiculous for any Man to criticiſe on the Works of another, who has not diſtinguiſhed himſelf by his own Performances. A Judge would make but an indifferent Figure who had never been known at the Bar. *Cicero* was reputed the greateſt Orator of his Age and Country before he wrote a Book *De Oratore*; and *Horace* the greateſt Poet before he publiſhed his *Art of Poetry*. This Obſervation ariſes naturally in any one who caſts his Eye upon this laſt mentioned Author, where he will find the Criticiſms placed in the latter End of his Book, that is, after the fineſt Odes and Satyrs in the *Latin* Tongue.

A Modern, whoſe Name I ſhall not mention, becauſe I would not make a ſilly Paper ſell, was born a Critick and an Examiner; and, like one of the Race of the Serpent's Teeth, came into the World with a Sword in his Hand. His Works put me in Mind of the Story that is told of a *German* Monk, who was taking a Catalogue of a Friend's Library, and meeting with a *Hebrew* Book in it, entered it under the Title of, *A Book that has the Beginning where the End ſhould be.* This Author, in the laſt of his Crudities, has amaſſed together a Heap of Quotations, to prove that *Horace* and *Virgil* were both of them modeſter Men than my ſelf; and if his Works were to live as long as mine, they might poſſibly give Poſterity a Notion, that *Iſaac Bickerſtaff* was a very conceited old Fellow, and as vain a Man as either *Tully* or Sir *Francis Bacon.* Had this ſerious Writer fallen upon me only, I could have overlooked it; but to ſee *Cicero* abuſed, is, I muſt confeſs, what I cannot bear. The Cenſure he paſſes upon this great Man runs thus. *The Itch of being very abuſive is almoſt inſeparable from Vain-Glory.* Tully *has theſe two Faults in ſo high a Degree, that nothing but his being the beſt Writer in the World can make amends for them.* The ſcurrilous Wretch goes on to ſay I am as bad as *Tully.* His Words are theſe: *And yet the* Tatler, *in his Paper of* September 26. *has out-done him in both. He ſpeaks of himſelf with more Arrogance, and with more Inſolence of others.* I am afraid, by his Diſcourſe, this Gentleman has no more read *Plutarch* than he has *Tully.* If he had, he would have obſerved a Paſſage in that Hiſtorian wherein he has with great Delicacy diſtinguiſhed between two Paſſions which are uſually complicated in human Nature, and which an ordinary Writer would not have thought of ſeparating. Not having my *Greek* Spectacles by me, I ſhall quote the Paſſage Word for Word as I find it tranſlated to my Hand. *Nevertheleſs, tho' he was intemperately fond of his own Praiſe, yet he was very free from envying others, and moſt liberally profuſe in commending both the Ancients and his Contemporaries, as is to be underſtood by his Writings; and many of thoſe Sayings are ſtill recorded, as that concerning* Ariſtotle, *That he was a River of flowing Gold:* Of Plato's *Dialogue, That if* Jupiter *were to ſpeak he would diſcourſe as he did.* Theophraſtus *he was wont to call his peculiar Delight, and being aſked, Which of* Demoſthenes *his Orations he liked beſt? He anſwered, The longeſt.*

And as for the eminent Men of his own Time, either for Eloquence or Philoſophy, there was not one of them which he did not, by Writing or Speaking favourably of, render more illuſtrious.

Thus the Critick tells us, That *Cicero* was exceſſively vain-glorious and abuſive; *Plutarch*, that he was vain, but not abuſive. Let the Reader believe which of them he pleaſes.

After this he complains to the World, that I call him Names, and that in my Paſſion I ſaid, he was *a Flea, a Louſe, an Owl, a Bat, a ſmall Wit, a Scribbler,* and *a Nibbler.* When he has thus beſpoken his Reader's Pity, he falls into that admirable Vein of Mirth, which I ſhall ſet down at length, it being an exquiſite Piece of Raillery, and written in great Gaiety of Heart. *After this Liſt of Names,* (viz. Flea, Louſe, Owl, Bat, *&c.) I was ſurpriſed to hear him ſay, that he has hitherto kept his Temper pretty well; I wonder how he will write when he has loſt his Temper. I ſuppoſe, as he now is very angry and unmannerly, he will then be exceeding courteous and good-humoured.* If I can outlive this Raillery, I ſhall be able to bear any Thing.

There is a Method of Criticiſm made Uſe of by this Author (for I ſhall take Care how I call him a Scribbler again) which may turn into Ridicule any Work that was ever written wherein there is a Variety of Thoughts. This the Reader will obſerve in the following Words: *He* (meaning me) *is ſo intent upon being ſomething extraordinary, that he ſcarce knows what he would be, and is as fruitful in his Similes as a Brother of his whom I lately took Notice of. In the Compaſs of a few Lines he compares himſelf to a Fox,* to Daniel Burgeſs, *to the Knight of the Red Croſs, to an Oak with Ivy about it, and to a Great Man with an Equipage.* I think my ſelf as much honoured by being joined in this Part of his Paper with the Gentleman whom he here calls my Brother, as I am in the Beginning of it by being mentioned with *Horace* and *Virgil.*

It is very hard that a Man cannot publiſh Ten Papers without ſtealing from himſelf: But to ſhow

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you that this is only a Knack of Writing, and that the Author is got into a certain Road of Criticism, I shall set down his Remarks on the Works of the Gentleman whom he here glances upon, as they stand in his 6th Paper; and desire the Reader to compare them with the foregoing Passage upon mine.

In Thirty Lines his Patron is a River, the Primum Mobile, *a Pilot, a Victim, the Sun, any Thing, and Nothing. He bestows Increase, conceals his Source, makes the Machine move, teaches to steer, expiates our Offences, raises Vapours, and looks larger as he sets.*

What Poem can be safe from this Sort of Criticism? I think I was never in my Life so much offended as at a Wag whom I once met with in a Coffee-house. He had in his Hand one of the Miscellanies, and was reading the following short Copy of Verses, which, without Flattery to the Author, is (I think) as beautiful in its Kind as any one in the *English* Tongue.

Flavia *the least and slightest Toy*
Can with restlesse Art employ.
This Fan in meaner Hands would prove
An Engine of small Force in Love;
But she with such an Air and Mien,
Not to be told, or safely seen,
Directs its wanton Motions so,
That it wounds more than Cupid's *Bow,*
Gives Coolness to the matchless Dame,
To every other Breast a Flame.

When this Coxcomb had done reading them, Heyday! (says he) What Instrument is this that *Flavia* employs in such a Manner as is not to be told, nor safely seen? In Ten Lines it is a Toy, a *Cupid's* Bow, a Fan, and an Engine in Love. It has wanton Motions, it wounds, it cools, and inflames.

Such Criticisms make a Man of Sense sick, and a Fool merry.

The next Paragraph of the Paper we are talking of, falls upon some Body whom I am at a Loss to guess at: But I find the whole Invective turns upon a Man, who (it seems) has been imprisoned for Debt. Whoever he was, I most heartily pity him; but at the same Time must put the Examiner in Mind, that notwithstanding he is a Critick, he still ought to remember he is a Christian. Poverty was never thought a proper Subject for Ridicule; and I do not remember that I ever met with a Satyr upon a Beggar.

As for those little Retortings of my own Expressions, of *being dull by Design, witty in* October, *shining, excelling*, and so forth; they are the common Cavils of every Witling, who has no other Method of shewing his Parts, but by little Variations and Repetitions of the Man's Words whom he attacks.

But the Truth of it is, the Paper before me, not only in this Particular, but in its very Essence, is like *Ovid's* Eccho:

—— *Quæ nec reticere loquenti,*
Nec prior ipsa loqui didicit. - - - -

I should not have deserved the Character of a Censor, had I not animadverted upon the above-mentioned Author by a gentle Chastisement; but I know my Reader will not pardon me, unless I declare, that nothing of this Nature for the future (unless it be written with some Wit) shall divert me from my Care of the Publick.

Advertisements.

ALL Sorts of fine Silks and Mercery Goods for Blank Lottery Tickets, at 7 l. 5 s. a Ticket, and sold as cheap as for Specie, at the Eagle and Child on Ludgate Hill.

AT the GREAT WHEAT-SHEAF painted upon a Copper Plate, next the Bell-Savage-Inn on Ludgate-hill, are sold all Sorts of rich Foreign Silk, with Gold and Silver Brocades: Likewise plain and flower'd Velvets for Gowns and Petticoats, and Coach Linings; with all Sorts of Silk Morning-Gowns, for Blank Lottery Tickets, at as high a Price as any Person shall give for them, and the aboveſaid Goods as cheap as for Specie.

†‡† Just published, A Military and Sea Dictionary: Explaining all difficult Terms in Martial Discipline, Fortification, and Gunnery, and all Terms of Navigation. The Fourth Edition, Improv'd. To which is added, The new Exercise of Firelocks and Bayoners, with Instructions to perform every Motion. Very useful (to all Persons that read the Publick News, or serve in the Army, Militia, or Navy) for the Understanding the Accounts of Sieges, Battles, and other Warlike and Marine Expeditions, which daily occur in this Time of Action. By Officers who serv'd several Years at Land and Sea. Printed; and sold by John Morphew near Stationers-Hall. Price 1 s. 6 d.

Morning-Gowns for Men and Women, of Silk, Stuffs, and Callicoe's (being the Goods of Persons that failed) which were to be disposed of at the Olive-Tree and Still, are now to be sold at the Golden Sugar-Loaf up one Pair of Stairs, over-against the Horse at Charing-Cross; with a fresh Parcel at very low Rates, the Price being set on each Gown.

*** On Saturday next will be published, for September, Atlas Geographus; or, A Compleat System of Geography, Ancient and Modern. With 100 new Maps, and as many Cuts. This 29th finishes Hungary, begins Turkey in Europe; with Sanson's Table thereof rectified according to the Treaty of Carlowitz; the Geography and History of Greece, Ancient and Modern, the Description of Constantinople, the Grand Signior's Court, &c. with 2 Maps, viz. Græcia Universa, and Turkey in Europe. Printed by J. Nutt in the Savoy, and sold by J. Morphew near Stationers-hall. Where may be had the Twenty eight preceding Months. Note, All Europe (except Great Britain) will be finished next Month, so Subscribers are desired to send in their Names by the End of this. Bibliotheca Anatomica, &c. for October, will be published on Monday next. Pr. 1 s. each.

FOR Sale by the Candle, this Day, being the 19th Instant, at Lloyd's Coffee-house in Lombard-street, at Four in the Afternoon (only 1 Cask in a Lot) viz. 15 Half-Hhds. and 6 Puncheons, of excellent French Bourdeaux and Coigniac Brandy, neat and entire, under the China-house of Mr. John Ferguson, at the Corner of the Paved Alley in Lyme-street, passing into Leadenhall-market; 2 Hhds. of White, 2 Ditto of Red, and 9 Pipes of Ditto, New Oporto, extraordinary good Wines, neat, an entire Parcel; 12 Pipes of New excellent Red Florence Wines, also neat, and an entire Parcel: Both in a Vault over-against Mr. Barefoot's at the Vine in Miles-lane, near Crooked-lane and Fishmongers-hall, in Thames-street. 6 Butts and 1 Ullage Hhd. of new Mountain dry Malaga Wines, neat; 2 Pipes of excellent Canary Wine, perfect fine, and fit for Draught: Both in a Cellar over-against the House of Mr. Charles Savage in Mark lane, between Fenchurch-street and Tower-street. The aforesaid Brandies and Wines are to be rasted till the Time of Sale. To be sold by Tho. Tomkins, Broker, in Seething lane, between Tower-street and Crouched-Friars.

TO be sold by the Importer, several Pipes of excellent Canary, neat, and fit for Draught, now a crackling. Enquire at Will's Coffee-house by the Royal-Exchange.

THis is to give Notice, That the Sale of the rich Bed, Hangings, Plate, &c. (which were seen at Drapers-Hall) being near full, will be drawn in Michaelmas Term next. All Persons who are willing to become Adventurers, are desired to be as speedy as possible in taking out Tickets, which (with the Proposals at large) are to be had at 2 Guinea's each, at Mr. Fleming's, at the Key against St. Dunstan's Church, Fleet-street; Mr. Stocker at the Mitre near York-Buildings; Mr. Farren's, at the blue Periwig in Russel-street Covent-garden, Goldsmiths; St. James's Coffee-house, Alice's Coffee-house, Old Palace-yard, Westminster; Sam's in Ludgate-street; Mr. Lillie's at the Corner of Beauford-Buildings; and at Mr. Nath. Carpenter's, Merchant, in Clement's-lane, Lombard-street, who will stand Security for the fair Performance, and where any Person not having seen them may have a View of the Goods.

MRs. Symonds's Sale of heavy Plate and other valuable Goods, which are to be seen at the Naked Boy and Coat in Henrietta-street being very near full, all Gentlemen and Ladies are desired to be speedy in taking out Tickets, which are to be had at the House above-mentioned, at Mr. Wyvill's, Silkman, near the Conduit in Cheap-side, Mr. Lillie's at the Corner of Beauford Buildings, Cross's Coffee-house in Cary-street, Lincoln's-Inn-fields, and all the other Places mentioned in the Prop sals.

NOtice is hereby given, That Mrs. Ogle's Catalogue of Plate, 20 l. for 6 d. being very near full, will be drawn on the 25th Instant. There being some Tickets still to be disposed of, all Persons that have a Mind to be Adventurers are desired to take them out speedily, at Mrs. Ogle's against Mountague house; at Mr. Sedgwick's, Hair-Cutter, in the Strand; at Mr. Green's, a Hatter, at the Catherine-Wheel in the Borough of Southwark; at Joe's Coffee-house, Hatton-Garden; at Mr. Ralfe's at the Black-Lion in Shoemakers-Row near Aldgate; at Mrs. Carter's, a Butterwoman, in Clare-Market by Clement's-Inn; and at Mr. Bumstad's, Furrier, at the White Lion and Crown in Walbrook.